

**OPINIONS AND DECLARATIONS
RENDERED BY THE INTER-
NATIONAL COMMISSION ON
ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE**

Edited by

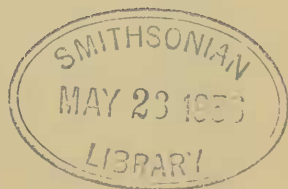
FRANCIS HEMMING, C.M.G., C.B.E.

Secretary to the Commission

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OPINION 389

Suppression under the Plenary Powers of two specific names for fleas published in 1802 and 1832 respectively hitherto treated as *nomina dubia* (Class Insecta, Order Siphonaptera)



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INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

COMPOSITION AT THE TIME OF THE ADOPTION OF THE RULING GIVEN IN OPINION 389

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Vice-President : Senhor Dr. Afranio do Amaral (*Sao Paulo, Brazil*) (12th August 1953)

Secretary : Mr. Francis Hemming (*London, England*) (27th July 1948)

B. The Members of the Commission

(*Arranged in order of precedence by reference to date of election or of most recent re-election, as prescribed by the International Congress of Zoology*)

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Mr. P. C. SYLVESTER-BRADLEY (*Sheffield University, Sheffield, England*) (12th August 1953)

Dr. L. B. HOLTHUIS (*Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, Leiden, The Netherlands*) (12th August 1953)

SUPPRESSION UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS OF TWO
SPECIFIC NAMES FOR FLEAS PUBLISHED IN 1802
AND 1832 RESPECTIVELY HITHERTO TREATED
AS "NOMINA DUBIA" (CLASS INSECTA,
ORDER SIPHONAPTERA)

RULING :—(1) Under the Plenary Powers the under-mentioned specific names are hereby suppressed for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy :—

- (a) *pungens* Walckenaer, 1802, as published in the combination *Pulex pungens* ;
- (b) *vespertilionis* Dugès, 1832, as published in the combination *Pulex vespertilionis*.

(2) The under-mentioned specific name is hereby placed on the *Official List of Specific Names in Zoology* with the Name No. 684 :—*eusarca* Dampf, 1908, as published in the combination *Nycteridopsylla eusarca*.

(3) The specific names specified in (1) above, as there suppressed under the Plenary Powers, are hereby placed on the *Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology* with the Name Nos. 261 and 262 respectively.

I. THE STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On 2nd May 1952, Mr. G. H. E. Hopkins (*British Museum (Natural History), Zoological Museum, Tring, Herts, England*) submitted the following application for the use by the Commission of its Plenary Powers for the purpose of suppressing two specific

names for fleas published in 1802 and 1832 respectively which had hitherto been treated as *nomina dubia* but which would, in his view, represent a threat to stability in the nomenclature of the groups concerned, so long as they retained the status of availability :—

Proposed use of the Plenary Powers to suppress two specific trivial names in the Order Siphonaptera (Class Insecta)

By G. H. E. HOPKINS, O.B.E., M.A.

(British Museum (Natural History), Zoological Museum, Tring, Herts.)

The object of the present application is to request the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to suppress two names of fleas, one of which has remained a *nomen dubium* since it was first published in 1832, while the other has recently been revived (on one occasion only) after having been out of use ever since its original publication in 1802.

2. *Pulex pungens* Walckenaer, 1802 (*Faune Parisienne*, 2 : 354) clearly refers to a mixture of several species, since it was stated to occur on rats, mice, bats and fowls, but there is a reference to a figure published by Goeze in 1776 together with a description of a bat-flea to which he did not give a name (Goeze, 1776, *Beschäft. berlin. Ges. Naturf. Fr.* 2 : 257, pl. 7, fig. 1), and this reference to a figure, being the most definite feature in the description, probably ought to be regarded as a restriction of the name *pungens* Walckenaer to the species of flea depicted by Goeze. The name remained out of use until Hopkins (1949, *Entomologist* 82 : 134—136) thought it necessary to try to identify the species to which it refers, and placed it as a senior synonym of *Nycteridopsylla eusarcus* Dampf, 1908 (*Schr. phys.-ökon. Ges. Königsberg* 48 : 398).¹ *Nycteridopsylla eusarcus* Dampf has been adequately described and figured, and the name is in general use for the species concerned; Hopkins would certainly not have placed it as a synonym of *N. pungens* (Walckenaer) if he had at that time been aware of the attitude that the Commission now adopts towards applications for the suppression of long-disused names. No author has followed his example as yet, so no inconvenience would be caused by the suppression of the name *pungens* Walckenaer. In a paper now in the press² Hopkins

¹ At the time when the present application was submitted to the Commission and when later it was published in the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*, it was first believed that this name was published in a later paper in the same year, as *Nycteropsylla eusarca* Dampf, 1908, *Schr. phys.-ökon. Ges. Königsberg* 49 : 45, fig. 3. The original reference has now been inserted in place of the foregoing reference.

² The paper here referred to has since been published (Hopkins, 1952, *J. Wash. Acad. Sci.* 42 : 364).

has announced his intention of making an application to the Commission for the suppression of the name and also his intention of reverting to the use of the name *Nycteridopsylla eusarca* Dampf, pending the Commission's decision.

3. *Pulex vespertilionis* Dugès, 1832 (*Ann. Sci. nat.*, Paris (1) 27 : 161, 164, pl. 4, fig. 4) was described in some detail, but the description is obviously inaccurate and even self-contradictory, while the figure gives practically no help towards the identification of the species concerned. The whereabouts of the type-material are unknown, no subsequent author appears to have been able to apply the name to any particular species, and Hopkins (1949, *Entomologist* 82 : 136, 137) was forced to consider *Pulex vespertilionis* Dugès to be unidentifiable.

4. The proposal which I now place before the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is that it should :—

- (1) use its Plenary Powers to suppress for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy :—
 - (a) the trivial name *pungens* Walckenaer, 1802, *Faune Parisienne*, 2 : 354, as published in the combination *Pulex pungens* ;
 - (b) the trivial name *vespertilionis* Dugès, 1832, *Ann. Sci. nat.*, Paris (1) 27 : 161, 164, pl. 4, fig. 4, as published in the combination *Pulex vespertilionis* ;
- (2) place on the *Official List of Specific Trivial Names in Zoology* the trivial name *eusarca* Dampf, 1908, as published in the combination *Nycteridopsylla eusarcus* (1908, *Schr. phys.-ökon. Ges. Königsberg* 48 : 398) ;
- (3) place on the *Official List of Rejected and Invalid Specific Trivial Names in Zoology* :—
 - (a) the trivial name *pungens* Walckenaer, 1802, as published in the combination *Pulex pungens*, as proposed under (1) (a) above, to be suppressed under the Plenary Powers ;
 - (b) the trivial name *vespertilionis* Dugès, 1832, as published in the combination *Pulex vespertilionis*, as proposed under (1)(b) above, to be suppressed under the Plenary Powers.

II. THE SUBSEQUENT HISTORY OF THE CASE

2. Registration of the present application : Upon the receipt of Mr. Hopkins's application, the question of the use by the

Commission of its Plenary Powers for the purpose of suppressing the specific names *pungens* Walckenaer, 1802, as published in the combination *Pulex pungens*, and *vespertilionis* Dugès, 1832, as published in the combination *Pulex vespertilionis*, was allotted the Registered Number Z.N.(S.) 674.

3. Publication of the present application : The present application was sent to the printer on 4th July 1952 and was published in the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature* on 29th August of the same year (Hopkins, 1952, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **6** : 353—354).

4. Issue of Public Notices : Under the revised procedure prescribed by the Thirteenth International Congress of Zoology, Paris, 1948 (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **4** : 51—56), Public Notice of the possible use by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature of its Plenary Powers in the present case was given on 29th August 1952 (a) in Part 11 of volume 6 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*, and (b) to the other prescribed serial publications. In addition, such Notice was given also to certain general zoological serial publications and to a number of entomological serials in Europe and America.

5. No objection received : The issue of the Public Notices specified in paragraph 4 above elicited no objection to the action proposed from any source.

III. THE DECISION TAKEN BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

6. Issue of Voting Paper V.P.(54)53 : On 5th April 1954, a Voting Paper (V.P.(54)53) was issued in which the Members of the Commission were invited to vote either for, or against, “ the proposal relating to the following specific names :—(a) *pungens* Walckenaer, 1802, as published in the combination *Pulex pungens*, and (b) *vespertilionis* Dugès, 1832, as published in the combination *Pulex vespertilionis*, as specified in Points (1) to (3) at the top of page 354 in volume 6 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature* ” [i.e. as set out in the Points numbered as above in paragraph 4 of the application reproduced in the first paragraph of the present *Opinion*].

7. The Prescribed Voting Period : As the foregoing Voting Paper was issued under the Three-Month Rule, the Prescribed Voting Period closed on 5th July 1954.

8. Particulars of the Voting on Voting Paper V.P.(54)53 : At the close of the Prescribed Voting Period, the state of the voting on Voting Paper V.P.(54)53 was as follows :—

(a) *Affirmative Votes had been given by the following nineteen (19) Commissioners (arranged in the order in which Votes were received) :*

Holthuis ; Bonnet ; Hering ; Vokes ; Riley ; Esaki ; Jaczewski ; Dymond ; Boschma ; Lemche ; Hankó ; do Amaral ; Bradley (J.C.) ; Pearson ; Hemming ; Cabrera ; Sylvester-Bradley ; Stoll ; Mertens ;

(b) *Negative Votes :*

None ;

(c) *Voting Papers not returned :*

None.

9. Declaration of Result of Vote : On 7th July 1954, Mr. Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission, acting as Returning Officer for the Vote taken on Voting Paper V.P.(54)53, signed a Certificate that the Votes cast were as set out in paragraph 8 above and declaring that the proposal submitted in the foregoing Voting Paper had been duly adopted and that the decision so taken was the decision of the International Commission in the matter aforesaid.

10. Preparation of the Ruling given in the present “ Opinion ” : On 24th August 1955, Mr. Hemming prepared the Ruling given in the present *Opinion* and at the same time signed a Certificate that the terms of that Ruling were in complete accord with those of the proposal approved by the International Commission in its Vote on Voting Paper V.P.(54)53.

11. Original References : The following are the original references for the names placed on *Official Lists* and *Official Indexes* by the Ruling given in the present *Opinion* :—

eusarcus, *Nycteridopsylla*, Dampf, 1908, *Schr. phys.-ökon. Ges. Königsberg* 48 : 398

pungens, *Pulex*, Walckenaer, 1802, *Faune paris.* 2 : 354

vespertilionis, *Pulex*, Dugès, 1832, *Ann. Sci. nat.*, Paris (1) 27 : 161, 164, pl. 4, fig. 4

12. Family-Group-Name Aspects : As the present *Opinion* is concerned exclusively with the status of certain specific names, no family-group-name problem arises for consideration.

13. At the time of the submission of the present application the name applicable to the second portion of a binomen was "trivial name". This was altered to "specific name" by the Fourteenth International Congress of Zoology, Copenhagen, 1953, which at the same time made corresponding changes in the titles of the *Official List* and *Official Index* of names of this category. These changes in terminology have been incorporated in the Ruling given in the present *Opinion*.

14. The prescribed procedures were duly complied with by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature in dealing with the present case, and the present *Opinion* is accordingly hereby rendered in the name of the said International Commission by the under-signed Francis Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, in virtue of all and every the powers conferred upon him in that behalf.

15. The present *Opinion* shall be known as *Opinion Three Hundred and Eighty-Nine* (389) of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature.

DONE in London, this Twenty-Fourth day of August, Nineteen Hundred and Fifty-Five.

*Secretary to the International Commission
on Zoological Nomenclature*

FRANCIS HEMMING